# U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND REGIME INSTABILITY

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## FOREWORD

This Letort Paper examines the relationship between U.S. military ties with foreign states and the extent to which the depth of these ties influences the level of political instability and violence in those states. Many pundits and scholars have criticized U.S. foreign policy for its reliance on military means of influence and have argued that other foreign policy tools, such as economic aid, cultural exchanges, and diplomacy can better promote American interests. Yet, few scholars have chosen to evaluate empirically whether the military relationship encourages or discourages political instability and violence in these nations. The author, Dr. James Meernik, analyzes these issues in a systematic and objective fashion and finds that the relationships between a U.S. military presence, U.S. military aid, the use of military force, and other factors are much more complex and subtle than many have believed.

The Strategic Studies Institute is pleased to publish this analysis as a contribution to the debate on this issue.

DOUGLAS C. LOVELACE, JR.
Director
Strategic Studies Institute

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF THE AUTHOR

JAMES MEERNIK is Professor of Political Science at the University of North Texas and Associate Editor of *International Studies Quarterly*. He is also Chair of the Department of Political Science. Dr. Meernik specializes in research on U.S. foreign policy and international criminal tribunals. His research has been published in *International Studies Quarterly*, the *Journal of Politics*, *Political Research Quarterly*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *International Criminal Law Review*, and the *American Journal of Political Science*. He is also author of *The Political Use of Foreign Military in U.S. Foreign Policy* (Ashgate Press) and co-editor of *Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in Post War Societies*, with Professor T. David Mason (Routledge Press). Dr. Meernik received his Ph.D. in Political Science from Michigan State University in 1992.

## SUMMARY

The United States utilizes a vast arsenal of foreign policy tools to induce, compel, and deter changes in other nations' foreign policies. As the quantity and quality of such activity increases, the U.S. "footprint" in such nations grows deeper and wider. The U.S. presence may range from a diplomatic mission to a massive invasion force. The United States may seek to use its presence to openly compel change in a regime's policies; it may employ its leverage to quietly induce policy modification; or it may use a combination of such strategies. And while the regime and citizens of one nation may welcome the United States and its largess, others may find such relationships a threat to the nation's honor and sovereignty. To the extent a deeper and broader foreign policy relationship (as measured by a U.S. military presence; U.S. foreign aid relationship; the discrete use of military force; and a substantial similarity in foreign policy preferences between the United States and another government) contributes to stability and friendship, U.S. interests are realized. But does a broad and deep military and foreign policy relationship with the United States always succeed in realizing these interests?

Why would a cooperative relationship with the United States precipitate political and societal instability in the host nation? First, the U.S. relationship with the friendly or client regime may undermine the popular legitimacy and sovereignty of the government or interfere with local, political processes. Second, political ties with the United States often impact local economic conditions. Whether it is economic ties per se the United States is seeking to advance through opening markets, providing economic assistance, or

promoting U.S. multinational corporation interests, or it is the economic spillover effects from a U.S. military presence, local market conditions are bound to be influenced by the actions of the world's largest economy within the local borders. Third, the local population may also be opposed to the broader U.S. foreign policy goals with which U.S. officials are seeking acquiescence or cooperation. Specific U.S. interests will also provoke antagonism as the populations of other states take exception to the ends or the means of U.S. foreign policy, and to their regime's degree of identification with such interests.

On the other hand, U.S. foreign policy means and ends are intended and designed to promote positive relations and maintain stability in those nations with whom the United States seeks to foster amicable and cooperative relationships. A strong U.S. presence can promote multiple, positive conditions. First, to the extent that a U.S. presence promotes both internal and external security for a nation, it provides the protection and stability a state needs to develop economically and politically. U.S. friendship can deter interstate rivals from overtly aggressive behavior and can dissuade internal political rivals from sowing unrest. Second, to the extent a U.S. military presence or U.S. military aid alleviates the need for a government to expend resources on its own security, a regime is better able to utilize freed up resources on economic and social development that should further the nation's prosperity. Third, a U.S. military presence and military aid can stimulate the local economy and provide jobs for many nationals who are involved in businesses that contract with and supply the U.S. military, and can open avenues of opportunity for citizens to take part in educational, economic, and military interactions with the United States.

I use statistical analyses to evaluate the extent to which indicators of a U.S. foreign policy relationship predict the level of terrorism, domestic instability, and war in other nations. I find a statistically significant relationship between several of the indicators of U.S. foreign policy and instability in foreign countries. The closer the relationship between a country and the United States, as measured by many of these indicators in most of the estimates, the more likely nations were to experience various forms of instability. Yet, the size of the impact of U.S. foreign policy was not always strong. Of all the measures of ties to U.S. foreign policy, the one that demonstrated the strongest and most consistent effects in the estimates was U.S. military aid. The greater the amount of military aid received by a foreign government, the more at risk it becomes for instability, including terrorism, riots, assassinations, anti-government demonstrations, and civil wars.

The other measure of U.S. foreign policy relationships that exercises a strong, albeit somewhat inconsistent impact on regime instability is involvement in a militarized dispute with the United States. When the United States has used military force in or toward a foreign regime in the previous year, the predicted incidence of terrorism and civil wars tends to increase in the following year. Uses of force may inspire anti-American sentiment, embolden regime opponents to take violent action against the government (especially in cases where the United States is taking action against the regime), or may simply indicate the prevalence of uncertainty and trouble in a nation.

We find less evidence that a large U.S. military presence contributes in any significant manner, at least so far as is apparent in these analyses, to regime instability. The effects of the size of the U.S.

military presence on the indicators is either small, statistically insignificant, or both. The last U.S. foreign policy indicator considered is the extent to which a nation's voting record in the United Nations (UN) General Assembly mirrors that of the United States. As a state's voting record in the UN more closely resembles the United States', the incidence of various forms of instability, including riots, anti-government demonstrations, assassinations, and government crises increases. Anti-Americanism is often *de rigueur* in many nations, and thus making public pronouncements against U.S. foreign policy objectives almost seems to be reflexive in many capitals around the world.

The nature of a country's political system also plays a much more crucial role. We see throughout the analyses that as constraints on the executive branch of government increased, the incidence of terrorism, riots, anti-government demonstrations, assassinations, government crises, and civil wars all increased. On the other hand, political competitiveness serves to decrease the likelihood of riots, anti-government demonstrations, government crises, assassinations, and civil wars. Viewed from the perspective of domestic tranquility, the most effective form of government would appear to be one with a strong executive and robust political competition. Economic prosperity appears to decrease instability. The greater a nation's per capita gross domestic product, the lower the predicted incidence of riots, anti-government demonstrations, assassinations, and civil wars. We also see, however, that more powerful states are more likely to experience acts of terrorism, riots, assassinations, and anti-government demonstrations, but are less likely to be involved in civil wars. These states typically have large economies, large populations, and large militaries. Their major

power status among the nations of the world may make them inviting targets for disaffected groups within their borders and terrorists from both the outside and inside, but not to the point at which intrastate war breaks out.

# U.S. FOREIGN POLICY AND REGIME INSTABILITY

## INTRODUCTION

A superpower, like the United States, and its foreign policy actions typically produce substantial consequences throughout the world—it is the 800 pound gorilla whose every move carries with it deep and wide repercussions. Hegemons are able to supply a number of public and private goods that earn them many allies, especially among those states with whom they already enjoy a coincidence of interests. The hegemon's very dominance, however, creates conflicts of interest, disputes, and challengers to its role regardless of the substance of its interests. U.S. foreign policy, broadly speaking, subsumes all actions taken by the U.S. Government that are directed toward influencing the conduct of world affairs in order to make the United States more secure and prosperous. When framed in the broadest and most inclusive terms, the United States seeks to influence other nations to adopt policies and take actions that more closely reflect American interests. The more approximately other nations align their foreign policy preferences to those of the United States, presumably, the better able is the United States to realize its preferences. Influencing other regimes to move toward the U.S. preferred position encompasses a substantial part of its foreign policy. To the extent that the United States is able to effect such changes through diplomatic inducement and deterrence and via other mechanisms that utilize its soft power, it preserves foreign policy resources for use in situations that require more forceful applications of U.S. power. And

while the U.S. Government sometimes deliberately, and sometimes inadvertently, takes actions that result in other nations moving their policies away from U.S. preferences, nonetheless the overall goal in world affairs remains: to make more nations act globally more like the United States.

The United States possesses a plethora of tools at its disposal to effect change or seek influence in foreign regimes, including the stationing of U.S. military forces in foreign nations, the use of military and economic assistance, and the discrete use of military force. Scholars have researched the extent to which these tools have helped promote U.S. foreign policy objectives, such as democratization, improvements in human rights, and economic development. While their conclusions stress the limited impact the United States, or any other nation for that matter, can have on such specific objectives, scholars have yet to investigate the extent to which U.S. foreign policy tools are associated with broader U.S. foreign policy goals—most specifically regime stability. U.S. foreign policy relations depend upon the stability of those nations with which it seeks good relations. Those nations the United States seeks to influence that experience civil unrest, terrorism, and war are unlikely to be capable of maintaining positive and productive relations with the United States, to say nothing of democratizing or improving their human rights practices. Thus, a fundamental goal of U.S. foreign policy must necessarily be to help such regimes remain peaceful, stable and free of terrorism. But, to what extent do U.S. foreign policy relations with nations help improve the likelihood that these basic requirements of an effective foreign policy are realized? Does the use of military force or the stationing of U.S. troops within such nations or the use of foreign assistance

contribute to peaceful and stable regimes that are free of terrorism? Or do these foreign policy tools in some manner make the realization of these objectives more difficult? The purpose of this monograph is to evaluate the degree to which U.S. foreign policies—the stationing of U.S. military personnel; the use of military force; the provision of foreign assistance—as well as a more general similarity of foreign policy interests between the United States and a foreign regime stabilizes or destabilizes such nations.

## BACKGROUND

The United States has utilized a vast arsenal of foreign policy carrots and sticks to induce, compel, and deter changes in other nations' foreign policies. Traditionally, U.S. foreign policy research focuses on the degree of success the U.S. Government has achieved when seeking specific objectives such as improvements in human rights conditions, democratic change, United Nations (UN) General Assembly voting, trade policies, and a host of other goals. The results of such studies have been mixed, with some finding evidence that the United States can induce nations to vote more closely according to its preferences in the UN General Assembly,[1] and that U.S. militarized actions do sometimes lead to advances in democracy in target nations.[2] Yet, other researchers have concluded that U.S. foreign assistance has little impact on human rights[3] or democratization,[4] and that the use of military force to promote democracy rarely works.[5] And even those researchers who have found evidence of linkages between U.S. foreign policy actions and target nation behavior conclude that such relationships are often neither strong nor direct. Thus, evidence of positive influence must be treated carefully.

In this analysis, I seek to examine more broadly the effect of U.S. foreign policy actions—do they increase or decrease regime stability? The prime directive of doctors, as well as many other types of practitioners, is held to be, "do no harm." That dictum may well be directed toward U.S. foreign policy—do U.S. foreign policy actions lead to harmful outcomes within those states with which the United States has established relationships? Are nations in which the United States maintains economic, political, and security relationships more likely to experience adverse political events that may be a result of the U.S. presence? More specifically, are the peoples of these nations likely to engage in disruptive or violent behavior because of their opposition to the U.S. presence or the degree of U.S. influence over their government? Or does the provision of foreign assistance, the use of military force, or the stationing of U.S. military personnel in a nation promote greater stability and lead to fewer instances of civil unrest, terrorism, and war? Does a close relationship with the United States provide foreign governments with the resources, assistance, and support they need to protect themselves from such threats?

Before delving into the relationship between U.S. foreign policy and domestic unrest in other nations, **I should make clear that as in all studies of influence, we must be extremely cautious in ascribing cause and effect status to phenomena whose precise relationship will often be simplified in our models and remain obscured in our data.** Such caveats must be assumed in all such analyses, but I state them unequivocally here at the outset.

The U.S. Government engages in a plethora of actions to seek, maintain, and promote relations with

other nations to better realize its broader foreign policy aims. As the quantity and quality of such activity increases, the U.S. "footprint" in such nations grows deeper and wider. The U.S. presence may range from a diplomatic mission to a massive invasion force. The United States may seek to use its presence to openly compel change in a regime's policies; it may quietly leverage policy modification; or it may use a combination of such strategies and everything in between. And while the regime and citizens of one nation may welcome the United States and its largess, others may find such relationships a threat to the nation's honor and sovereignty. I assume that in most cases the United States prefers a stable government and acquiescent population in such target nations, although it may foment unrest against some regimes whose policies it finds particularly objectionable. I further assume that when unrest and violence do occur, they tend to undermine U.S. foreign policy objectives by destabilizing friendly regimes. As indicated above, a close foreign policy relationship with the United States may help promote peace and stability; it may be associated with unrest and instability; and, of course, it may have little or no effect at all. I first describe below why states that maintain close ties with the United States might experience more negative consequences, before describing the rationale behind the opposing arguments.

**U.S. Foreign Policy and Regime Instability.**

Why would a cooperative relationship with the United States precipitate political and societal instability in the host nation? There may be numerous, specific U.S. policies the local populace finds objectionable, but

here I focus on three broader sets of concerns that might engender opposition to the United States and ultimately its allies in the host regime. First, the U.S. relationship with the friendly or client regime may undermine the popular legitimacy and sovereignty of the government or interfere with local political processes. Given that the United States is pursuing its own foreign policy interests and seeking to sway regimes to adopt more favorable domestic and international policies, we must assume that (a) the local regime has not adopted policies sufficiently close to the U.S.-preferred position already because its own political interests and key constituents dictate otherwise; and (b) the United States is seeking to convince the regime to adopt policies that run contrary to its perceived interests. Ultimately, no matter how much the United States may seek to hide or disguise its efforts, many local officials and ordinary citizens are likely to resent U.S. actions as intrusive and be offended by the perceived subversion of their national interests. The more extensive the relationship between the United States and the local regime, the greater the probability that such opposition will grow.

Second, political ties with the United States often impact local economic conditions. Whether it is economic ties per se the United States is seeking to advance through opening markets, providing economic assistance, or promoting U.S. multinational corporation (MNC) interests, or it is the economic spillover effects from a U.S. military presence, local market conditions are bound to be influenced by the actions of the world's largest economy within the local borders. For example, U.S. economic assistance that fosters free market reforms may, in turn, lead to reduced government subsidies to some economic sectors; spending reductions in social welfare programs; and the advancement of the interests

of U.S. MNCs and local economic elites at the expense of small businesses and workers. A large U.S. military and/or political presence may lead to the growth of industries that cater more to the demands of U.S. Government personnel than to the local population, and may distort wages in some sectors of the economy. Even if the aggregate impact of all these U.S. actions is positive and leads to growth in the local economy, there will still likely be resentment at U.S. involvement in local affairs and the creation of winners and losers in the local economy that will breed further opposition to the U.S. role.

Third, the local population may also be opposed to the broader U.S. foreign policy goals with which U.S. officials are seeking acquiescence or cooperation. Some degree of opposition to U.S. interests will form either because governments and their citizens oppose them because they are *American* interests and/or because they are the interests of a hegemon. Hegemonic interests, regardless of their substance, will always be met with some resistance from some quarters as the hegemon's challengers seek to assert their own interests. Tensions and jockeying for power in global affairs are a near constant feature of international relations throughout history. Specific U.S. interests will also provoke antagonism as the populations of other states take exception to the ends or the means of U.S. foreign policy, and to their regime's degree of identification with such interests. And even though regimes may seek to distance themselves from the particular U.S. actions that arouse such opposition, nonetheless, the deeper their overall ties with the United States, the greater the likelihood that U.S. unpopularity will lead to local unrest.

Therefore, given these several reasons why citizens and even some regime leaders would oppose U.S.

foreign policies, U.S. influence, and a U.S. presence in their nations, the first, general hypothesis I will test is that the greater the degree of local U.S. involvement, the greater the likelihood of domestic unrest. The extent and nature of the local U.S. presence will act as a lightning rod for opposition to U.S. policies more generally and as a source of contention locally. It is both emblematic and symbolic of the relationship between the United States and the host government that can galvanize opposition to the (perceived) negative consequences of U.S. influence, and can serve to inspire those opposed to U.S. policies more generally. And while greater involvement often also provides greater local benefits as U.S. aid and military resources flow into a country, the political and economic negative externalities of extensive involvement increase as well. I do not attempt to assess whether, on balance, the U.S. presence provides greater benefits than costs. Rather, I assume that there are direct and indirect relationships between the size and nature of the U.S. presence and the likelihood of local opposition, and ultimately unrest. Further, I must acknowledge that the level of opposition to U.S. foreign policy in any given nation will not remain constant over time, but will fluctuate depending on the salience and visibility of U.S. actions. Thus, the causal pathways between the U.S. presence and local, domestic unrest are several and complex.

**U.S. Foreign Policy and Regime Stability**.

On the other hand, U.S. foreign policy means and ends are intended and designed to promote positive relations and maintain stability in those nations with whom the United States seeks to foster amicable and cooperative relationships. A strong U.S. presence can

promote multiple positive conditions. First, to the extent that a U.S. presence promotes both internal and external security for a nation, it provides the protection and stability a state needs to develop economically and politically. U.S. friendship can deter interstate rivals from overtly aggressive behavior and can dissuade internal, political rivals from sowing unrest. Second, to the extent a U.S. military presence or U.S. military aid alleviates the need for a government to expend resources on its own security, a regime is better able to utilize freed up resources on economic and social development that should further the nation's prosperity. Third, a U.S. military presence and military aid can stimulate the local economy and provide jobs for many nationals who are involved in businesses that contract with and supply the U.S. military, and can open avenues of opportunity for citizens to take part in educational, economic, and military interactions with the United States. Therefore, the second, general hypothesis I test is that the greater the degree of local U.S. involvement, the lesser the likelihood of domestic unrest. I describe below several hypotheses based on these potential relationships and note where both positive and negative effects may result from U.S. foreign policy actions.

## HYPOTHESES

### U.S. Troop Presence.

*The Potential Negative Impact*. The U.S. Government maintains a military presence in most nations of the world. The troops that are stationed on foreign soil range in responsibilities from small contingents of Marines that provide diplomatic protection, to the many thousands of U.S. forces stationed in allied states

including Europe, Japan, and South Korea. While their missions may vary and change over time, the impact of the presence of such forces can go far beyond their actual purposes. However, the U.S. military presence will likely serve as a lightning rod when the U.S. Government takes unpopular foreign policy positions and actions. Opposition to U.S. hegemony will likely be greater the more visible the manifestation of such influence in the presence of U.S. military personnel. As the foremost symbol of U.S. influence, a U.S. military presence will likely serve as both an inspiration and target for local opposition to the United States. I measure a U.S. military presence by the number of U.S. military personnel listed as stationed in all nations of the world.[6] I save for later a lengthy discussion of the dependent variables.

**Hypothesis 1a: The greater the number of U.S. forces stationed in a foreign nation, the greater the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

*The Potential Positive Impact*. Contrarily, a U.S. troop presence can potentially have many positive influences on local political conditions. Some of the larger deployments can have substantial beneficial effects on the economy by generating growth in local industries and services to support the U.S. personnel. U.S. personnel make many positive contributions to the society and the government through training programs, community involvement, and other endeavors. While not generally charged with influencing the internal affairs of these states, the military presence nonetheless may have important secondary effects on the likelihood of stability and peace in foreign nations. Local citizens, who live near, work at, or simply follow

developments at American overseas military bases, become cognizant of a variety of American cultural and political customs. Long-term exposure to these ideas and practices may help inculcate democratic values in the populace and lead to calls for positive political change. The U.S. military also sponsors a number of programs and classes for foreign military personnel to impress upon them the importance of civilian control of the armed forces and other democratic and human rights values. In order to ensure continued American access to foreign bases, the U.S. Government also has an interest in stable and legitimate governments in these nations and may push some regimes toward democratization rather than risk less predictable forms of political change (e.g., the Philippines, 1986).

**Hypothesis 1b: The greater the number of U.S. forces stationed in a foreign nation, the lesser the level of domestic unrest, terrorism, and war in that nation.**

**U.S. Military Aid**.

*The Potential Negative Impact*. The provision of U.S. military assistance no doubt wins the United States key friends in foreign regimes and militaries, but may also provoke anger and resentment on the part of many outside the government who disapprove of its uses. U.S. military aid may be used to help buttress unpopular repressive regimes; it may free up funds that regimes can then use to support private military forces, and it may be used to support unpopular wars or other programs, such as drug eradication. Ultimately, many in the population will likely see little direct benefit from U.S. military assistance and believe that U.S. aid dollars would be better invested in social programs

and other initiatives designed to help the people. And to the extent that the population perceives the military assistance program as furthering U.S. dominance, whether locally or globally, its unpopularity may provoke dissention and unrest. Scholars have sought to determine if linkages occur between the decision to provide foreign aid and the level of such aid, and improvements in a nation's human rights practices and democratization. Regan finds in his study of U.S. aid on human rights repression in 32 developing nations that "... U.S. economic aid has had little or no impact on the human rights practices of the recipient governments."[7] Similarly, in a study of the impact of U.S. foreign assistance on democratization, Knack finds that "The evidence presented here does suggest that either the favorable impacts of aid on democratization are minor; or they are roughly balanced by other democracy-undermining effects of aid dependence."[8] I measure U.S. military assistance using annual data in constant U.S. dollars from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).[9]

**Hypothesis 2a: The greater the level of the U.S. military assistance spending in a foreign nation, the greater the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

*The Potential Positive Impact*. While most U.S. foreign assistance is given for political, economic, and security interests, it has also been used to advance and reward democracy, human rights protections, and other such goals that should enhance stability and peace in foreign nations. Insofar as military aid exposes foreign citizens to U.S. political values and helps to create a civil society, the underpinnings of stability and democracy

are encouraged. The net impact of aid in general according to Carothers is "…usually modestly positive, sometimes negligible, and occasionally negative."[10]

**Hypothesis 2b: The greater the level of the U.S. military assistance spending in a foreign nation, the lower the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Militarized Disputes.**

*The Potential Negative Impact*. Nothing symbolizes U.S. hegemony more than its use of military force to influence international politics and to effect political change in other nations. While some regimes and groups may support U.S. military action in some crises, often the use of force is viewed as evidence of U.S. heavy-handedness in global affairs. Many regimes and individuals will likely view U.S. military actions as protective of U.S. national interests rather than local interests, and believe the United States cares little for the value of civilian lives in those nations it enters. Thus, even though the U.S. military may be dispatched to provide order and stability in foreign nations, it may also precipitate more violence and unrest. Several scholars are skeptical of the utility of U.S. attempts to enforce its values and practices on other nations, and argue that military force is far too blunt an instrument with which to export values that take time, commitment and resources to grow.[11] It is certainly possible as well, however, that there is reciprocal causation occurring between the use of military force by the United States and foreign unrest, for such military operations may be authorized in response to violence and instability in foreign nations. In order to account for such reciprocal

causation, I lag this variable 1 year. I measure this variable as the number of militarized interstate disputes the United States was involved in with each nation of the world.[12]

**Hypothesis 3a: The greater the number of U.S. militarized disputes involving a foreign nation in the previous year, the greater the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

*The Potential Positive Impact*. Throughout U.S. history, the military has been employed on behalf of friendly relations and liberalist ideals, such as the promotion of democracy and human rights. Presidents dispatched the armed forces into Central America and the Caribbean in the early part of the 20th century, as well as the 1980s, to ensure the peace and oversee elections. More recently, the U.S. military has played a major role in the democratization process in Haiti and Bosnia after civil strife and war tore apart those nations. Indeed, one of the five major objectives of U.S. military strategy in the *Annual Defense Report 2000* is fostering an international environment in which "Democratic norms and respect for human rights are widely accepted."[13] Scholars have discovered, however, that while the utility of military force depends on a deeper commitment among U.S. policymakers to regime stability, democratization, and the promotion of human rights, military operations do influence the likelihood of democratic transitions.[14] After spending substantial sums of money and incurring a great many political costs in major military deployments, policymakers will seek to help build friendly and peaceful regimes. And of all the tools in the U.S. foreign policy arsenal, none provides the degree of direct influence that military

force does. Operations may be designed to facilitate stability, human rights, and democratic transitions (e.g., Haiti), or compel them (e.g., Germany and Japan after World War II).

**Hypothesis 3b: The greater the number of U.S. militarized disputes involving a foreign nation in the previous year, the lesser the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**U.S. Foreign Policy Similarity.**

*The Potential Negative Impact*. Taking a stand in favor of U.S. foreign policy positions is often a risky undertaking as U.S. actions often have a way of alienating some people and regimes that do not share the U.S. world view. Democratically-elected leaders in particular may sometimes pay a high price for their support of unpopular U.S. policies as we have recently seen with regard to the war in Iraq. To the extent that the publicly expressed positions of governments align these regimes with U.S. foreign policies, we would expect that opposition to close identification with U.S. interests would increase, and such regimes would be more susceptible to domestic unrest. To measure the correspondence between a nation's foreign policy positions and those of the United States, I utilize an indicator of UN General Assembly voting similarity developed by Eric Gartzke, which ranges from "-1" (representing nations whose voting similarity is least like the United States) and "1" (representing nations whose voting similarity is most like the United States).[15]

**Hypothesis 4a: The more similar the voting behavior of a nation in the UN General Assembly to that of the United States, the greater the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

*The Potential Positive Impact*. Contrarily, regimes that closely align with U.S. foreign policy interests may enjoy U.S. support and favoritism on a wide variety of issues. U.S. influence on international political and economic organizations is substantial, and the United States can use its influence to help ensure outcomes favorable to friendly states. Close alignment with U.S. foreign policy interests may also result in a regime receiving more tangible rewards, such as government contracts, foreign assistance, and other types of largess that can have a positive effect on regime stability.

**Hypothesis 4b: The more similar the voting behavior of a nation in the UN General Assembly to that of the United States, the lesser the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Control Variables.**

To ensure a properly estimated model, I also include several control variables that have generally been found to exercise a substantial impact on the dependent variables—unrest, terrorism, and war. First, the level of democracy in a society should have a negative impact on these events. More democratic nations provide for outlets for citizens' grievances against their governments, such as legal protests, freedom of speech, freedom of the press, and the power to change office holders through regular and free elections. These opportunities should diminish

the attractiveness of more violent forms of protest and should increase regime stability and decrease the incidence of terrorism and war. I use several measures of the level of democratization from the Polity IV data base.[16] I first include a measure of the number of constraints the executive branch of a government must labor under. Previous research has found that the more constraints the executive must contend with, the more difficult it is for the executive to take strong measures to counter unrest and violence.[17] I use the Polity IV measure "ExConst" that is coded "1" for unlimited authority; "3" for slight to moderate limitations on executive authority; "5" for substantial limitations on executive authority; "7" for executive parity or subordination; and values "2," "4," and "6" as intermediate categories. I also include a measure of the degree of political competitiveness in a regime. In contrast to the previous variable, we would expect that, as political competition increases, there is less need for individuals to resort to violent methods of expressing their dissatisfaction with government. I also use the Polity IV variable measuring the level of political competition, "PolComp," but create a political competition variable that is coded "1" for those nations that receive the highest PolComp score, and "0" otherwise. Political Competition refers to "the extent to which alternative preferences for policy and leadership can be pursued in the political arena"[18] and whether, "Participation is regulated to the extent that there are binding rules on when, whether, and how political preferences are expressed.[19] Finally, I use a measure of regime durability. We would expect that regimes that have been in existence for longer periods of time would have better experience and institutions capable of handling dissent and unrest, or channeling

it in appropriate directions. This variable also comes from Polity IV and is described in extensive detail in their codebook.[20] It is simply a measure of the number of years a regime has been in existence.

Second, states with larger populations have been found to be more likely to experience various types of unrest, particularly terrorism.[21] The greater the size of the population, the more likely it is that there are groups of people within the society whose grievances have not been satisfactorily dealt with. Thus, states with large populations should show more signs of domestic unrest, experience more terrorism, and be more likely to be involved in wars. I measure total population using data from the World Development Indicators CD from the World Bank. Third, states with greater levels of economic development should be more stable. An economy that effectively produces wealth, and in which there is a reasonable distribution of such rewards, should lessen many citizens' potential for unrest by providing employment and more tangible rewards, and by promoting an economically more prosperous future. Combined, these effects should substantially detract from the attractiveness of violent action. I measure economic development using per capita gross domestic product (GDP) from the World Development Indicators CD from the World Bank. Fourth, I control for state power. States with a greater share of power internationally are likely to make more attractive targets for terrorists because of their greater ability to influence international politics.[22] I measure state power using the Correlates of War Composite Indicator of National Capability.[23] The Correlates of War Composite Indicator of National Capability encompasses total population, urban population, iron and steel production, and energy consumption (as

indicators of economic size comparable across time), number of military personnel, and defense expenditures, and is measured as each state's percentage of the world power total across all these factors. Finally, I control for regional effects by including binary variables for the Western hemisphere (Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada); Sub-Saharan Africa; Europe; and Asia. The Middle East is used as the reference category.

**Hypothesis 5: The greater the number of executive constraints in a regime, the greater the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Hypothesis 6: The greater the level of political competition in a regime, the lesser the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Hypothesis 7: The greater the number of years a regime has been in existence, the lesser the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Hypothesis 8: The greater a state's population, the greater the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Hypothesis 9: The greater a state's level of economic development, the lesser the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Hypothesis 10: The greater a state's power, the greater the level of domestic unrest, terrorism and war in that nation.**

**Measuring Domestic Unrest, Terrorism, and War.**

I analyze the impact of the variables described above on three separate sets of indicators. First, I look at several measures of domestic unrest: riots, government crises, assassinations, and anti-government demonstrations. These data are measured on an annual basis for all countries of the world and are from the Banks Cross-National Time Series Data Archive.[24] Second, I analyze data on terrorism from the Oklahoma City National Memorial Institute for the Prevention of Terrorism (MIPT) Terrorism Knowledge Database.[25] These data include all acts of terrorism, both domestic and transnational, that occur within a country.[26] Finally, I analyze civil and international wars as defined and measured in the Correlates of War Intrastate and Interstate data bases.[27] Civil wars are defined as disputes where military action was involved, at least 1,000 battle deaths resulted during the civil war, the national government at the time was actively involved, and there was effective resistance (as measured by the ratio of fatalities of the weaker to the stronger forces).[28] International wars are defined as disputes between two or more members of the international state system in which there are at least 1,000 battle deaths. All dependent variables are measured on an annual basis for all nations of the world for which there are data. All independent variables are also measured on an annual basis, but are lagged 1 year to account for the likelihood that the impact of such variables will not be instantaneous, but will take some amount of time to manifest.

## METHODOLOGY

To address and answer the questions and hypotheses posed above, I will use several statistical techniques to analyze these data. For the assessment of the factors that predict regime instability and terrorism, I use a statistical technique known as negative binomial regression. Because the data on regime instability and terrorism are counts of events (riots, government crises, anti-government protests, assassinations, and acts of terrorism), use of ordinary least squares regression is inappropriate as its results would be inefficient, inconsistent and biased.[29] I use robust standard errors to address the likelihood of heteroskedasticity among the error terms as has been done in many other studies.[30]

### Analyzing Acts of Terrorism.

The results of the model estimating the impact of the variables described above on acts of terrorism are presented in Table 1. I will address the impact of the independent variables first and then discuss the overall fit of the model, its ability to predict acts of terrorism, and analyze which nations are most at risk for such actions. Most of the coefficients for the independent variables are statistically significant at the .05 level. I note first that all indicators of U.S. foreign policy relations—the size of a U.S. military presence, if any; the amount of military aid provided to a regime; and involvement in a militarized dispute with the United States, are positive. Close ties with the United States, as evidenced by these indicators, are correlated with risk for increasing numbers of acts of terrorism, with one exception. I stress again that we cannot assume that there is a causal relationship at work here, given the limitations of all statistical models. We can, however,

make qualified inferences regarding the nature of these relationships. I use the incidence rate ratio to interpret the statistical effect of the variables. This measure tells us the impact of a variable on the number of terrorist actions holding other variables constant at their mean value. Thus, the incidence ratio for the variable "U.S. Military Presence" is approximately 1.0, which tells us that for every unit increase in the number of U.S. troops deployed in a nation, all other things being equal, the model predicts that the incidence rate of terrorist actions increases by a factor of .000002 percent, which is to say, very little. However, if the metric of a U.S. military presence we use is 1,000 troops instead of 1, the predicted impact is .002 percent. Therefore, we would conclude that while there is a statistically significant relationship between the size of a U.S. military presence and acts of terrorism, the substantive impact is quite small.

| Variable | Incidence Rate Ratio | Robust Standard Error | Z Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Military Presence | 1.000002 | 1.20E-06 | 2.00* |
| U.S. Military Aid | 1.000594 | 0.0002737 | 2.17* |
| U.S. Use of Force | 1.496336 | 0.2404266 | 2.51* |
| Votes w/U.S. in UN | 0.9958253 | 0.0019663 | -2.12* |
| Exec. Constraints | 1.164188 | 0.0437411 | 4.05** |
| Elect. Competitiveness | 0.8049459 | 0.202824 | -0.86 |
| Regime Duration | 0.985462 | 0.0024363 | -5.92** |
| Population | 1 | 1.00E-09 | -1.45 |
| GDP per capita | 1.000012 | 9.55E-06 | 1.28 |
| Share of Int. Power | 1.284451 | 0.1674165 | 3.50** |
| W. Hemisphere | 0.0858026 | 0.0235913 | -8.93** |
| Europe | 0.4787733 | 0.1225046 | -2.88** |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 0.1333856 | 0.0285602 | -9.41** |
| Asia | 0.3774109 | 0.0907622 | -4.05** |
| N = 3556 | | | |
| Wald Chi2 = 387.56, p, > .0000 | | | |

a = Not all years will be represented in all analyses due to missing data, especially in the 1953-67 period.
* = Statistically significant at the .05 level.
** = Statistically significant at the .01 level.

**Table 1. Predicting Terrorism Across States, 1953-2003.[a]**

We find a similar relationship existing between U.S. military aid to regimes and the expected level of terrorist activity. Here the incidence rate ratio is 1.000594. For every $1 million increase in U.S. military assistance *ceteris paribus* (other things being equal), the predicted level of terrorist actions in a nation increases by a factor of .000594 percent. Here we see that it takes a substantial, but not altogether rare, increase in the level of military aid to truly impact the number of terrorist attacks. When aid increases by $100 million, the model predicts a significant likelihood of an upsurge in terrorist activity—terrorism would increase by a factor of 5.94 percent at this level of military assistance.

There is a slightly different story, however, when we examine the impact of prior U.S. involvement in militarized disputes with a nation. Here we see that with each additional militarized dispute the model predicts an increase in the frequency of terrorist actions by a factor of 1.49, or approximately 49 percent. Given that there have been several instances in which the United States has used force within or against a nation in a given year, the potential for a significant and substantial rise in the level of terrorist activity is quite real. As hypothesized above, these types of militarized disputes may inflame relations between the United States and the regime in question, or catalyze terrorist groups into attacking the regime (if the regime is perceived as being too close to the United States, or U.S.-related individuals, businesses, installations, or organizations in that nation). Thus, there are clear policy implications here. Subsequent to U.S. military actions occurring within or against other nations, based on the model's estimates, there would seem to be a substantial likelihood of increasing terrorist actions in those states.

Interestingly, the model shows that states whose foreign policies are similar to those of the United States, as reflected in the closeness of their voting patterns in the UN, are less likely to experience terrorism. As voting similarity increases on this "-1" to "1" scale by a factor of "1," the incidence of terrorism declines by a factor of 1 percent (1—the incidence rate ratio of .99), *ceteris paribus*. Since a change of one full point on this scale is quite rare, (except perhaps in cases where a new regime comes to power that is diametrically opposed to [or supportive of] the United States where the previous regime exhibited just the opposite behavior), this impact factor is not necessarily meaningful. If, however, there were a change on the order of a .1 increase, *ceteris paribus*, we should expect to find a corresponding 0.1 percent decrease in terrorist activity.

Together, these first results would seem to suggest that while a close relationship with more tangible aspects of U.S. foreign policy—a military presence, military aid relationship, and involvement in U.S. militarized actions—tends to be associated with an increase in the risk of terrorism, a similarity in foreign policy orientation toward the world per se does not seem to enhance the probability of terrorist activity within a state. Terrorists may well be inspired and galvanized into action by the more manifest military policies the United States engages in rather than some of the more abstract and removed policies at issue at the UN. I must caution again, however, that these estimates do not prove that a state's close foreign policy relationship with the United States directly causes terrorism. All that we may reasonably conclude is that those states that do maintain such ties with the United States are at greater risk for increasing levels of terrorist activity. The long-term and structural factors that give rise to

the conditions that make terrorism more likely may involve the nature of the regime's ties to the United States, but they may also reflect the regime's domestic and international policies that are correlated with both closeness to the United States and terrorist activity.

As Li finds, the impact of democracy on predicted levels of terrorism depends on the extent to which there are constraints placed on the executive, the competitiveness of the electoral process, and regime durability.[31] I had argued, as have other researchers, that democratic societies provide for more opportunities for individuals to present their grievances in a nonviolent manner and so ought to experience fewer incidents of terrorism.[32] Thus, we find that there is a negative relationship between electoral competitiveness and terrorism, albeit one that is statistically insignificant. On the other hand, executives that face a great many constraints on their power, as in more democratic societies, are handicapped in their ability to prevent terrorism. Totalitarian or authoritarian regimes, by contrast, through deeper and broader government monitoring of individual behaviors, are able to prevent such individuals from coalescing into effective action groups. For example, one of the few nations for which there is no record of any terrorism in the period under study is North Korea, one of the most repressive police states in the world. Thus, we see that the more constraints placed on the executive branch, the more likely that nation is to experience terrorist actions. A one-unit increase in the measure of executive constraints is associated with a 1.16 factor increase in terrorist activity, all other things being equal. Regimes that have existed for longer periods of time are statistically less likely to experience terrorist attacks. For every year a regime has been in existence, terrorist attacks decrease

by a factor of 2 percent, which is not large, but still indicates that longer-lasting regimes tend to be more stable and capable of addressing grievances that might lead to terrorism, or addressing through their criminal justice systems the potential for terrorist activity.

Neither a strong economy (as evidenced by per capita gross domestic product [GDP]) nor a large population appear to exercise any kind of meaningful impact on the incidence of terrorism in a given country. The coefficients for both variables are statistically insignificant. Some of their impact, however, may be absorbed by the state power variable. The incidence rate ratio for this variable is statistically significant and positive, which indicates that more powerful states are more likely to experience terrorist violence. As I argued above, such states are attractive targets for terrorists because their power and influence in international relations are not only more likely to incur the wrath of terrorists and like-minded individuals that view themselves and others as oppressed by such powers, but also because attacks against these nations are also more likely to generate tremendous publicity, thereby furthering the terrorists' cause(s).[33] The incidence rate ratio indicates that for every one unit increase in a state's share of global GDP, terrorism increases by a factor of 28 percent. I stress again, however, that it is not possible to claim that there is a causal relationship between state power and terrorism that can be identified from this analysis. As well, most of these more powerful nations tend to be Western states, against whom much terrorism is directed because of cultural and other differences. State power certainly plays a role as an underlying factor that makes conditions ripe for the emergence of terrorist activity. Yet, just as the collision of two weather fronts does not

automatically produce storms, but creates a conducive set of environmental conditions, so, too, does state power create an underlying and facilitating condition that makes terrorism more likely. Thus, even though we cannot then predict precisely when and where terrorist actions will occur in powerful states, we know at least to look for such events to occur where the conditions are most favorable, and not in other states where such conditions are absent.

The coefficients for the regional variables are all statistically significant and negative, which is exactly as I expected. Because the Middle East, which tends to experience more than its share of terrorists incidents, is the reference category, the other regions of the world look more peaceful in comparison. In particular, those nations in the Western hemisphere, (with the exception of the United States, which is not included in the analysis), Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa are far less likely to experience acts of terrorism.

The next stage in the analysis is to evaluate the predictions of the model to determine which nations are predicted to be most likely to experience acts of terrorism. Using the model's parameters, I am able to generate an annual count of the *predicted* number of acts of terrorism, which can be compared against the actual number of such incidents. The vast majority of the nations of the world are not predicted to experience more than one act of terrorism per year, so I focus instead on those nations that are predicted to experience three or more such actions in a given year. Those nations are listed in Table 2 in descending order of frequency. Note that the number associated with each nation is the *number of years each nation is predicted to experience at least three acts of terrorism*. According to the model's estimates of the number of years a nation is

predicted to experience three or more acts of terrorism, four nations in particular stand out. Japan is predicted to experience multiple acts of terrorism in 33 of the years under study; Israel is predicted to experience multiple acts of terrorism in 29 of the years under study; the People's Republic of China is predicted to experience multiple acts of terrorism in 26 of the years under study; and Turkey is predicted to experience such violence in 22 of the years under study. There are then several nations the model predicts to experience fewer, but still multiple years in which there are at least three acts of terrorism: Egypt (in 13 of the years under study), Germany (in 12 of the years under study), and Iran (in 9 of the years under study). Then there are several nations that the model predicts to experience 5 or fewer years in which there were at least three acts of terrorism including: Sudan, South Korea, France, Kuwait, and India. As can be seen when comparing the actual number of terrorist incidents with the predicted number, the model tends to overestimate the number of such attacks. Given that a nation fits a "profile" of the type of nation most likely to experience multiple acts of terrorism (because many of the characteristics that predict such actions tend not to change dramatically from year to year), such nations are predicted to be at risk for multiple acts of terrorism in many years. Thus, the model tends to err on the side of over-predicting terrorist actions.

| Nation | Actual Number of Years to Experience 3 or more Terrorist Acts | Number of Years Predicted to Experience 3 or more Terrorist Acts |
|---|---|---|
| Japan | 33 | 33 |
| Israel | 29 | 34 |
| China | 26 | 34 |
| Turkey | 22 | 34 |
| Egypt | 13 | 33 |
| Germany | 12 | 30 |
| Iran | 9 | 34 |
| Sudan | 5 | 33 |
| South Korea | 3 | 33 |
| France | 2 | 34 |
| Kuwait | 1 | 34 |
| India | 1 | 34 |

**Table 2. Terrorism Across Time in Specific States.**

Acts of terrorism may often be the final culmination of domestic unrest, protest, and violence. While certainly not all countries that are characterized by such conditions can be expected to subsequently experience terrorist violence, these problems may well help set the stage. Therefore, I next analyze the incidence of four types of domestic unrest to determine which nations are most susceptible to this kind of instability and the impact exercised by U.S. foreign policy actions on these indicators. The types of unrest I examine are: riots, government crises, anti-government protests, and assassinations. I assess the impact of each of the independent variables across all four of these dependent variables. I again use the negative binomial Poisson model to estimate these models.

**Analyzing Riots, Government Crises, Assassinations, and Anti-Government Demonstrations.**

I turn first to examine the effect of the indicators of foreign policy relationships with the United States. The presence of U.S. military forces stationed in foreign states has a mixed effect across the four models. The incidence rate ratio for this variable is statistically significant and positive in the estimates of the number of government crises and assassinations, but statistically insignificant in the models of riots and anti-government demonstrations. Interestingly, the effect of the U.S. military presence is greater on the two indicators of what we might consider to be *elite* unrest and instability. Government crises may have deep and wide societal implications, but they often most directly involve regime leaders. Assassinations may involve government, militia, or other disaffected groups, but the targets are generally chosen for their high profile elite status. Taking this logic a step further, but as always bearing in mind the difficulties associated with making direct, causal inferences, it might be that a U.S. military presence may lead to political difficulties for those in authority, but it may not always inspire protesters in the streets. The substantive impact, as we saw in the model of terrorist actions, however, is still rather slight even when the incidence rate ratio is statistically significant. A rather sizeable increase in the number of U.S. troops stationed in a foreign country is required before the predicted incidence of these instability indicators will increase.

| Variable | Incidence Rate Ratio | Robust Standard Error | Z Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Military Presence | 1.000002 | 1.21E-05 | 0.14 |
| U.S. Military Aid | 1.000857 | 0.0001955 | 4.39** |
| U.S. Use of Force | 1.26268 | 0.2789959 | 1.06 |
| Votes w/U.S. in UN | 1.005758 | 0.0015081 | 3.83** |
| Exec. Constraints | 1.122513 | 0.031688 | 4.09** |
| Elect. Competitiveness | 0.3953134 | 0.0830152 | -4.42** |
| Regime Duration | 1.001912 | 0.0023837 | 0.80 |
| Population | 1 | 1.31E-09 | -2.92** |
| GDP per capita | 0.9999185 | 1.40E-05 | -5.81** |
| Share of Int. Power | 2.642474 | 0.436165 | 5.89** |
| W. Hemisphere | 1.564312 | 0.3410365 | 2.05* |
| Europe | 1.523099 | 0.3910556 | 1.64 |
| Asia | 1.345988 | 0.3109115 | 1.29 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 0.8887289 | 0.1922901 | -0.55 |

N = 3529
Wald Chi2 = 275.34, p. > .0000

a = Not all years will be represented in all analyses due to missing data, especially in the 1953-67 period.
* = Statistically significant at the .05 level.
** = Statistically significant at the .01 level.

**Table 3. Predicting Riots Across States, 1953-2003[a]**

| Variable | Incidence Rate Ratio | Robust Standard Error | Z Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Military Presence | 1.000033 | 7.82E-06 | 4.28 |
| U.S. Military Aid | 1.000117 | 0.0000987 | 1.19 |
| U.S. Use of Force | 0.7505721 | 0.1499794 | -1.44 |
| Votes w/U.S. in UN | 1.009069 | 0.0015081 | 6.04 |
| Exec. Constraints | 1.181774 | 0.0328868 | 6.00 |
| Elect. Competitiveness | 0.6410277 | 0.115992 | -2.46 |
| Regime Duration | 0.9927423 | 0.0038722 | -1.87 |
| Population | 1 | 8.53E-10 | 1.56 |
| GDP per capita | 0.9999873 | 8.82E-06 | -1.43 |
| Share of Int. Power | 1.028082 | 0.0858346 | 0.33 |
| W. Hemisphere | 1.296985 | 0.2683659 | 1.26 |
| Europe | 1.153472 | 0.258977 | 0.64 |
| Asia | 0.6479616 | 0.1463463 | -1.92 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 0.4570045 | 0.1034931 | -3.46 |

N = 3529
Wald Chi2 = ?

a = Not all years will be represented in all analyses due to missing data, especially in the 1953-67 period.
* = Statistically significant at the .05 level.
** = Statistically significant at the .01 level.

**Table 4. Predicting Government Crises Across States, 1953-2003.[a]**

| Variable | Incidence Rate Ratio | Robust Standard Error | Z Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Military Presence | 1.000051 | 1.65E-05 | 3.10 |
| U.S. Military Aid | 1.000489 | 0.0002805 | 1.74 |
| U.S. Use of Force | 0.9070447 | 0.271061 | -0.33 |
| Votes w/U.S. in UN | 1.00377 | 0.0019995 | 1.89 |
| Exec. Constraints | 1.219769 | 0.0413677 | 5.86 |
| Elect. Competitiveness | 0.2940166 | 0.0729774 | -4.93 |
| Regime Duration | 0.9892272 | 0.0034038 | -3.15 |
| Population | 1 | 1.54E-09 | -1.06 |
| GDP per capita | 0.9999486 | 1.41E-05 | -3.64 |
| Share of Int. Power | 1.504927 | 0.2725631 | 2.26 |
| W. Hemisphere | 2.686127 | 0.715274 | 3.71 |
| Europe | 1.205287 | 0.3462627 | 0.65 |
| Asia | 0.5724315 | 0.1670668 | -1.91 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 0.2534697 | 0.0732883 | -4.75 |

N = 3529
Wald Chi2 = 347.37 p. > .0000

a = Not all years will be represented in all analyses due to missing data, especially in the 1953-67 period.
* = Statistically significant at the .05 level.
** =Statistically significant at the .01 level.

## Table 5. Predicting Assassinations Across States, 1953-2003.[a]

| Variable | Incidence Rate Ratio | Robust Standard Error | Z Score |
|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Military Presence | 1.00001 | 1.04E-05 | 0.99 |
| U.S. Military Aid | 1.000742 | 0.0001818 | 4.09 |
| U.S. Use of Force | 1.203814 | 0.2166477 | 1.03 |
| Votes w/U.S. in UN | 1.00228 | 0.0014051 | 1.62 |
| Exec. Constraints | 1.125486 | 0.029078 | 4.58 |
| Elect. Competitiveness | 0.2664754 | 0.0496631 | -7.10 |
| Regime Duration | 0.9989689 | 0.0023239 | -0.44 |
| Population | 1 | 1.00E-09 | -3.28 |
| GDP per capita | 0.9999831 | 9.53E-06 | -1.77 |
| Share of International Power | 1.950096 | 0.2451572 | 5.31 |
| Western Hemisphere | 3.130197 | 0.6889581 | 5.18 |
| Europe | 2.474976 | 0.6183625 | 3.63 |
| Asia | 2.252687 | 0.5422655 | 3.37 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | 0.9407727 | 0.2224798 | -0.26 |

N = 3530
Wald Chi2 = ?

a = Not all years will be represented in all analyses due to missing data, especially in the 1953-67 period.
* = Statistically significant at the .05 level.
** = Statistically significant at the .01 level.

## Table 6. Predicting Anti-Government Demonstrations Across States, 1953-2003.[a]

The incidence rate ratio for the variable measuring the degree of a military aid relationship between a foreign regime and the United States is statistically significant and positive in all but one of the models. Greater levels of U.S. military assistance provided to a regime are associated with a greater incidence of riots, assassinations, and anti-government demonstrations, *ceteris paribus*. The impact of this variable is also substantial across all three of these models. A $100 million increase in U.S. military assistance is associated with a factor rate increase of 8 percent in the number of riots; a factor rate increase of approximately 5 percent in the number of assassinations; and a factor rate increase of 7 percent in the number of anti-government demonstrations.

Some words of caution are in order, however, for understanding the nature of the relationship between U.S. troop levels, military assistance, and regime instability. Those regimes to which the United States provides significant levels of military assistance, as well as those nations wherein the United States stations a sizeable number of military personnel, are mostly states with whom the United States shares ongoing, close ties. Thus, aid levels and the number of military personnel stationed in these countries are not likely to fluctuate widely from one year to the next. Thus, while aid and troops are not constants, there are relatively long-lasting features of the U.S. relationship with certain regimes. As such, their impact may be registered in a more subtle and fundamental way that the statistical analysis cannot always detect. Thus, while we do find evidence of a positive correlation in several cases, we must be mindful of the difficulties of untangling the true causal nature of the relationship. I return to this point in the conclusion.

When the United States is involved in a militarized dispute with a nation the year prior, the incidence of domestic unrest in that nation does not appear to be substantially affected. None of the indicators of domestic unrest were statistically related to these incidents. American involvement in these disputes can certainly affect political developments in the target states, but this influence does not appear to extend to the level of (in)stability in a society.

Contrarily, we see evidence of a strong relationship between the extent to which a government votes in a fashion similar to the United States in the General Assembly of the United Nations and the frequency of riots, government crises, assassinations, and anti-government demonstrations, although the incidence rate ratio slightly misses statistical significance in the last type of unrest. In fact, a 10 percent rise in vote similarity between a foreign regime and the United States increases the incident rate ratio by 5 percent in the estimates of riots; 9 percent in the estimates of government crises; and 3 percent in the estimates of assassinations. While we cannot rule out the possibility that it might be the United States whose voting patterns are most closely resembling those of other states, given the relative consistency of U.S. foreign policy over time, its regime stability, and its enduring hegemonic interests, it is much more likely the case that other states whose foreign policies can and do shift more frequently based on international conditions, and whose regimes and constitutions are more at risk of upheaval, change their foreign policies to move closer or farther away from U.S. foreign policies. Thus, the United States may well find itself in a conundrum because of these trends. On the one hand, it would like to encourage states to shift their policies more to its

liking, yet at the same time the United States certainly does not want to be forced to address the domestic unrest that might occur when a regime substantially and dramatically changes its foreign policies to align them with those of the United States. Many sectors in these societies may have strong anti-American views that are enflamed by close ties with the United States, which then manifest themselves in domestic unrest. Indeed, even those nations that host U.S. military forces and receive substantial amounts of U.S. military aid often take positions contrary to American interests in order to demonstrate their independence from the United States. For example, in the Middle East it may be difficult enough for a nation to host U.S. forces without incurring the wrath of the anti-Americanists. If such a nation, or any nation in the region, took the U.S. position on an issue involving Israel in the UN, the likelihood of unrest would likely increase dramatically. Symbolic politics, of just the sort that occur in the UN, can often generate as much instability and violence as more tangible elements of politics in certain parts of the world on certain issues.

As we would expect, regime type plays a critical role in predicting a state's propensity to suffer domestic unrest. In all models, the extent to which the executive is constrained in the exercise of power is positively related to riots, government crises, assassinations, and anti-government demonstrations. The incidence rate ratio for this variable is statistically significant and powerful in all four models. The frequency of riots increases by a factor of 12 percent with every unit increase in executive constraints; the incidence of government crises increases by a factor of 18 percent; the frequency of assassinations increases by a factor of 21 percent; and the incidence of anti-government demonstrations rises by a factor of 12 percent for every

unit increase in executive constraints. Strong executives are able to clamp down on dissent or the potential for dissent.

On the positive side for democratic states, we see that the greater the competitiveness of elections, the lower the level of all forms of domestic unrest. I find that the frequency of riots decreases by a factor of 61 percent, with a unit increase in electoral competitiveness; the incidence of government crises decreases by a factor of 36 percent; the frequency of assassinations decreases by a factor of 71 percent; and the incidence of anti-government demonstrations falls by a factor of 74 percent in states where there is full electoral competitiveness. Hence, while the constraints democratic regimes typically require executives to operate under are associated with increases in domestic unrest, the competitiveness of their electoral systems has the opposite impact. It is also important to note that the impact of political competitiveness on reducing instability is greater than the impact of executive constraints in discouraging instability. Presumably free and fair elections allow citizens to express their voices and opposition in such a way that energies that might have been directed toward more violent forms of protest are channeled into peaceful and healthy democratic practices and discourse.

Of course, elections can also be a mixed blessing. Elections held too early in a critical period of transition, such as in the aftermath of war, may harden political and sectarian cleavages and precipitate more violence, especially from the losing side(s). Thus, it is also important to consider the longevity of the regime. All things being equal, I argue that more established and longer-lasting regimes exhibit greater effectiveness at addressing citizens' aspirations, thus allowing them to survive longer. The results tend to bear out this

supposition. The longer a regime has been in existence, the less likely it is to experience domestic unrest, *ceteris paribus*. The incidence rate ratio for regime durability is negative and statistically significant in two of the models. The frequency of government crises and assassinations decreases by a factor of 1 percent in each model. The incidence rate ratio is statistically insignificant in the riots and government demonstrations models.

The impact of population size on the indicators of civil unrest is mixed. I find that the larger the population size, the more infrequent are riots and anti-government demonstrations, while the incidence rate ratio is statistically insignificant in the cases of assassinations and government crises. Yet, the effect of increasing populations is so minuscule that its substantive impact barely registers. Large states may be advantaged to some very small degree perhaps because collective action problems may be more difficult to resolve with larger numbers of potential rioters. On the other hand, one would assume there would be more opportunities for civil unrest in large states simply because the likelihood that all citizens would not engage in such behavior would diminish with size.

Per capita GDP is negatively related to the frequency of riots, government crises, assassinations, and anti-government demonstrations, although the incidence rate ratio for this variable in the government crisis model is not statistically significant. As the economic well-being of a nation becomes healthier and stronger, there is less reason to engage in such forms of domestic unrest—a prosperous citizenry is a content citizenry by and large (although we must also recognize that in many of the wealthiest countries in Europe and elsewhere, there will be those who, because of their society's prosperity, have the time to engage in the

sorts of protests we normally see when the G-8, the World Bank, or the International Monetary Fund have a gathering). Additionally, when a nation's economy is running smoothly and people are working hard, there is much less opportunity to engage in violent forms of protest. Contrarily, those nations in which large numbers of citizens are unemployed, especially young men, there is ample opportunity for such protests, and ultimately violence.

Finally, I note the impact of the regional variables on domestic unrest. There is a positive relationship between the Western hemisphere dummy variable and the frequency of all forms of domestic unrest, although the incidence rate ratio is statistically insignificant in the government crises model. Europe is statistically more likely to experience riots and anti-government demonstrations. Asia is unlikely to experience government crises or assassinations, but is statistically more likely to experience anti-government demonstrations. Africa is unlikely to experience government crises or assassinations. Thus, if one were searching for a stable part of the world that is most unlikely to experience these forms of unrest and violence, the nations of Sub-Saharan Africa would seem to be least inclined toward these particular measures of domestic unrest, while Latin America appears to be the most prone to various forms of domestic instability. Does this mean that there is little to fear in Africa and much to fear in Latin America, the Caribbean, and Canada? Not exactly, it may be that the democratic freedoms that are enjoyed by citizens residing in the Western hemisphere protect them from terrorism, as we saw above, but also enable the masses and elites to express their grievances in other inappropriate, but less feared ways.

The final step in the analysis of domestic unrest involves further investigation of the predictions of the model. From each of the four sets of estimates, I generate the predicted number of events at issue and look to see which nations are estimated to suffer from the greatest number of these incidents in the overall period 1998-2003. I focus on the period from 1998 through 2003 (the last year for which we have complete data on all independent variables) since it is the most recent time period. Beginning with the predictions for the number of riots in Table 7, I find that the model predicts the following nations are most likely to be susceptible to multiple riots in multiple years in this period: South Korea, China, India, and Brazil. China especially is fairly consistently predicted to be the site of numerous riots. Brazil, China, and India in particular are large, populous nations with diverse groups of citizens and their economies are rapidly improving, but much of their wealth has yet to filter down to the urban and rural poor. The enormous concentrations of poor people in the large cities of Brazil and India in particular would seem to pose a number of potential political problems for these regimes. Both states have significantly weaker executives than China, which increases their predicted likelihood of experiencing riots. The final state to address, South Korea, has been the scene of several riots and mass demonstrations throughout its history. It also has received a significant amount of U.S. military assistance over the years, and of course, hosts a sizeable contingent of U.S. military personnel. It too, continues to be at substantial risk for riots in the coming years. I note, however, that there is a significant divergence between the number of predicted riots and the number of actual riots in these nations. The model tends to over-predict riots

in all cases. Among the states predicted to experience the greatest number of riots, only Brazil in 2 years and China in 1 year actually experienced any such violence. I caution, however, that we are most interested in the impact of the particular coefficients rather than the overall fit of the model, given that we cannot hope to include all the relevant factors that would explain riots in every nation of the world for over 30 years.

| Country | Year | Predicted Number of Riots | Actual Number of Riots |
|---|---|---|---|
| South Korea | 1998 | 2.117554 | 0 |
| South Korea | 2000 | 2.289237 | 0 |
| Brazil | 2000 | 2.487619 | 1 |
| Brazil | 1998 | 2.560891 | 1 |
| Brazil | 1999 | 2.603625 | 0 |
| India | 1998 | 6.980083 | 0 |
| India | 2000 | 7.306079 | 0 |
| India | 1999 | 7.6298 | 0 |
| China | 1998 | 520.5337 | 1 |
| China | 1999 | 667.8264 | 0 |
| China | 2000 | 807.7075 | 0 |

**Table 7. Predicted Number of Riots in Most Riot-Prone States.**

Because government crises in any given nation are relatively infrequent events, I calculated the average number of predicted government crises across the 1998-2003 period and rank-ordered the nations by their propensity to experience such events in Table 8. South Korea also has the distinction of having the highest number of predicted government crises in the 1998-2003 period. Again, because these events are quite rare, their predicted numbers for any nation never exceed a fraction. Thus, and for example, the predicted number of government crises for South Korea is .577 over the period 1998-2003. Behind South Korea, we find the following nations in order of their predicted number of

crises: India, Moldova, Bulgaria, Estonia, Dominican Republic, Poland, Nicaragua, Slovakia, and Romania. A comparison of the predicted number of government crises and the actual number of such events reveals that the model's ability to predict such events across all nations over time has improved relative to the other models. Several of the nations that are at higher risk for such events have experienced government crises, including Israel, Haiti, Romania, and India.

| Country | Predicted Number of Crises | Actual Number of Crises |
|---|---|---|
| Georgia | 0.336 | 0 |
| Israel | 0.353 | 2 |
| Haiti | 0.360 | 4 |
| China | 0.372 | 0 |
| Romania | 0.379 | 2 |
| Slovakia | 0.384 | 1 |
| Nicaragua | 0.385 | 0 |
| Poland | 0.397 | 0 |
| Dominican Republic | 0.412 | 0 |
| Estonia | 0.419 | 0 |
| Bulgaria | 0.432 | 0 |
| Moldova | 0.443 | 0 |
| India | 0.465 | 3 |
| South Korea | 0.577 | 0 |

**Table 8. Predicted Number of Government Crises in Most Crisis-Prone States.**

Using the same technique described at the beginning of this paragraph, I now examine those nations the model predicts to be most at risk for assassinations. The nations that are predicted to be most susceptible to this form of political instability are: South Korea, Brazil, China, Haiti, Nicaragua, Mexico, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Paraguay, and Guatemala. Thus, eight of the top ten nations most likely to experience

assassinations are in the Western Hemisphere, which mirrors the positive coefficient for the Western Hemisphere variable in this model. Indeed, as one moves further down the list, one finds even more U.S. neighbors at risk for this type of violence. Interestingly, the one nation we do not find in this predicted risk category is Panama, which had long been host to a large U.S. military presence. The model correctly predicts that many of the countries mentioned above are at a greater risk for experiencing assassinations, such as Haiti, Guatemala, Ecuador, and Mexico. However, as we have seen in other such comparisons, the model tends to over-predict these events for China and South Korea.

| Country | Predicted Number of Assassinations | Actual Number of Assassinations |
|---|---|---|
| Colombia | 0.6582577 | 0 |
| Venezuela | 0.6729389 | 0 |
| Poland | 0.6826647 | 0 |
| El Salvador | 0.684644 | 0 |
| Trinidad | 0.7203708 | 0 |
| Guyana | 0.7210622 | 0 |
| Turkey | 0.7422592 | 0 |
| Honduras | 0.775623 | 1 |
| Chile | 0.9656047 | 0 |
| Guatemala | 0.9960665 | 3 |
| Bolivia | 1.022303 | 0 |
| Paraguay | 1.033625 | 1 |
| Ecuador | 1.070644 | 3 |
| Dominican Republic | 1.105379 | 1 |
| Mexico | 1.139081 | 7 |
| Nicaragua | 1.234218 | 0 |
| Haiti | 1.27119 | 14 |
| China | 1.568136 | 0 |
| Brazil | 1.645399 | 1 |
| South Korea | 1.950788 | 0 |

**Table 9. Predicted Number of Assassinations in Most Assassination-Prone States.**

The group of countries most at risk for experiencing anti-government demonstrations (Table 10) largely mirrors those most likely to suffer riots. China, India, South Korea, Brazil, and also Japan are predicted to be most at risk for these types of events. The model does quite well at accurately predicting anti-government demonstrations in India, Brazil, and China, and not as well in Japan and South Korea. Indeed, the latter two states are, as we have seen before, home to sizeable numbers of U.S. forces that tend to place them at greater risk for these types of events. Yet, despite their enhanced risk, both states have not been experiencing these kinds of events in recent years although they have in the period prior to 1998-2003.

| Country | Year | Predicted Number of Anti-Government Demonstrations | Actual Number of Anti-Government Demonstrations |
|---|---|---|---|
| India | 1998 | 2.59 | 3 |
| India | 2000 | 2.595 | 1 |
| India | 1999 | 2.713 | 0 |
| Brazil | 2000 | 3.221 | 4 |
| Japan | 2000 | 3.3 | 0 |
| Brazil | 1998 | 3.321 | 3 |
| Brazil | 1999 | 3.357 | 2 |
| Japan | 1998 | 3.901 | 0 |
| Japan | 1999 | 4.022 | 0 |
| South Korea | 1999 | 4.031 | 0 |
| South Korea | 1998 | 4.347 | 0 |
| South Korea | 2000 | 4.771 | 0 |
| China | 1998 | 36.5 | 5 |
| China | 1999 | 42.01 | 8 |
| China | 2000 | 49.16 | 7 |

**Table 10. Predicted Number of Anti-Government Demonstrations in Most Anti-Government Demonstration-Prone States.**

**Analyzing Civil Wars.**

I turn next to an examination of the determinants of civil or intrastate wars and the impact of U.S. foreign policy actions on these conflicts. The dependent variable is measured "1" for every year a civil or intrastate war, as measured by the Correlates of War project, is occurring in a given country. In this and the next analysis, I make use of the statistical technique known as probit, which is specifically designed to model binary dependent variables. I use robust standard errors to control for the effects of heteroskedasticity, or unequal variance across nations. The results indicate again that the greater the size of U.S. military presence in a nation and the greater the amount of U.S. military aid, the more likely a nation is to experience a civil war in the following year. As we have seen in earlier estimates, however, the impact is rather slight. I utilize the marginal effects of the independent variables to interpret their impacts. The marginal effect is the increase in probability of observing the event of interest (a civil war) given a unit increase in the independent variable while holding all other variables constant at their mean value. An increase of 10,000 troops stationed in a foreign country is associated with only a .07 increase in the predicted probability of a nation experiencing a civil war, while a $100 million increase in military assistance only raises the probability of war by .003 percent. Involvement in a militarized dispute with the United States in the previous year, however, tends to increase the predicted probability of a civil war by 4 percent. While this effect is not enormous, we must remember that civil wars are still comparatively rare across the world, and so even an increase of 4 percent can have an important impact on the likelihood of such conflict. A similar foreign policy outlook with the United States does not

appear to play a role in predicting intrastate war. The coefficient for this variable is statistically insignificant.

| Variable | Coefficient | Robust Standard Error | Z Score | Marginal Effects dy/dx |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Military Presence | 6.06E-06 | 1.84E-06 | 3.30** | 7.40E-07 |
| U.S. Military Aid | 0.0002862 | 0.0001047 | 2.73** | 0.0000349 |
| U.S. Use of Force | 0.3411118 | 0.1520468 | 2.24* | 0.041623 |
| Votes w/U.S. in UN | -0.0014879 | 0.0009915 | -1.50 | -0.0001816 |
| Executive Constraints | 0.0921713 | 0.0172836 | 5.33** | 0.0112469 |
| Electoral Competitiveness | -0.863148 | 0.11877 | -7.27** | -0.0757816 |
| Regime Duration | -0.002428 | 0.0021537 | -1.13 | -0.002963 |
| Population | 2.24E-09 | 7.95E-10 | 2.81** | 2.73E-10 |
| GDP per capita | -0.0000183 | 8.67E-06 | -2.11* | -2.23E-06 |
| Share of International Power | -0.1676459 | 0.078853 | -2.13* | -0.0204564 |
| Western Hemisphere State | -0.2771268 | 0.1218003 | -2.28* | -0.0299169 |
| Europe | -0.4762562 | 0.1469816 | -3.24** | -0.0466866 |
| Sub-Saharan Africa | -0.1942956 | 0.1123812 | -1.73* | -0.0224387 |
| Asia | -0.266977 | 0.127014 | -2.10* | -0.0282473 |
| Constant | -1.297713 | 0.1129342 | -11.49 | |
| N = 3556 | | | | |
| Pseudo R2 = 0.0988 | | | | |

a = Not all years will be represented in all analyses due to missing data, especially in the 1953-1967 period.
* = Statistically significant at the .05 level.
** = Statistically significant at the .01 level.

**Table 11. Predicting Civil Wars Across States, 1953-2003.[a]**

We also see that an important role in predicting civil war occurrence is played by regime characteristics. Those states in which there are more constraints placed on the exercise of power by the executive are statistically more likely to lapse into civil war. With every unit increase in such constraints, the predicted likelihood of intrastate war occurring in a nation rises by 1 percent. A stronger executive branch should be better able to act more quickly and decisively to stop domestic unrest from spiraling into open warfare, or failing that, to take actions to stop such wars from lasting for long periods of time. We also see

that political systems that permit greater electoral competition are less likely to experience civil wars. In political systems where there are full and free electoral competitiveness, the predicted likelihood of intrastate war occurring in a nation diminishes by 7 percent, which is quite substantial. Regime durability is not related to the likelihood of civil war. Thus, these results speak rather clearly: Regimes with strong executives and strong electoral competition are best poised to provide the opportunity for vigorous leadership, but their legitimate and open avenues for healthy political competition provide effective outlets for grievances.

States with less developed economies, and large states, are at greater risk for experiencing civil wars. The smaller a state's per capita gross domestic product, the greater the predicted probability of civil war. For every $1000 decrease in per capita GDP, there is a corresponding .2 percent increase in the likelihood of civil war involvement. For every increase of one million people in a nation, the probability of civil war occurrence increases by .02 percent. I stress again that while these numbers are not large, their cumulative impact on the likelihood of the occurrence of such a rare event can be important. I also note that a state's share of international power is negatively associated with civil war. Simply put, more powerful states are not susceptible to the same sorts of threats to their power and status as are other states. For every percentage point increase in international power, the predicted likelihood of civil war occurrence declines by 2 percent. Lastly, I note that all of the regions listed, including Africa, are less likely to experience civil wars. Rather, it is the Middle East which forms the reference category for a region that is the area most likely to experience this form of warfare, as it is the case with so many other indicators of instability and violence.

| Country | Year | Predicted Probability | Civil War Occurrence |
|---|---|---|---|
| Turkey | 1999 | 0.2903540 | 1 |
| Egypt | 2000 | 0.3282427 | 0 |
| Israel | 1999 | 0.3292693 | 0 |
| China | 2000 | 0.3341122 | 0 |
| India | 1998 | 0.5100014 | 1 |
| India | 1999 | 0.5129918 | 1 |
| India | 2000 | 0.5252401 | 1 |

**Table 12. Predicted Probability of Civil War Occurrence By Year.**

| Country | Predicted Probability |
|---|---|
| Turkey | 0.2239113 |
| Egypt | 0.2554384 |
| Israel | 0.1998441 |
| China | 0.2570855 |
| India | 0.5160778 |

**Table 13. Predicted Probability of Civil War Occurrence from 1998-2003.**

I next describe which countries appear to be most susceptible to civil war violence. I first calculated the predicted probability that a nation would experience a civil war and selected out just those states whose probability was 25 percent or greater in any given year since 1998. I then examined their average probabilities of experiencing civil wars across the years 1998-2003. I focus on the period from 1998 through 2003 (the last year for which we have complete data on all independent variables) since it was the most recent period. The states that exhibited the greatest predicted likelihood of such violence were Turkey (an average of 22 percent across 1998-2003 and reaching a high of 29 percent in

1999); Egypt (an average of 26 percent and reaching a high of 32.8 percent in 2000); Israel (an average of 20 percent across 1998-2003 and reaching a high of 33 percent in 1999); China (an average of 25.7 percent across 1998-2003 and reaching a high of 33 percent in 2000) and India (an average of 52 percent across the entire period and reaching a high of 52.5 percent in 2000). I would note that both Egypt and Israel receive substantial amounts of U.S. military assistance, which may help explain why their predicted probabilities are fairly high. As well, based on their government policies, the number of dissident and terrorist groups with grievances against them, in addition to the usual array of conflict-producing politics in the Middle East, we should expect that these states would be prime candidates for intrastate war.

Of those nations that the model predicted would experience civil wars in this time frame, it correctly predicts that in 1998, 1999, and 2000 India would be involved in such conflict. The model incorrectly predicted that Turkey would not experience such violence in 1999, when it did. The model registers an increased likelihood of civil war for China, Israel and Egypt, but the predicted probability does not exceed .50 and so the model does not generate a prediction of civil war violence. Overall, the model accurately predicts 91.6 percent of the cases correctly for a slight improvement over predicting the modal category of no civil war (91.4 percent) in all cases.

**Analyzing International Wars.**

I turn finally to the model explaining and predicting the occurrence of international war. The indicators of a relationship with the United States are all positively signed again, although the incidence rate ratio for the military aid variable is not statistically significant. The larger the permanent U.S. military presence in a state, greater involvement in militarized disputes in the previous year with the United States, and a record of frequently voting with the United States in the UN all tend to increase the predicted probability of state involvement in international war. Given the extreme rarity of international war, especially in recent years, the impact of any one variable on these events is quite small. Even if the United States were to increase the size of its permanently deployed forces in a nation by 100,000, this would only serve to raise the probability of war by barely 1 percent. An increase of 50 percent in vote similarity at the UN would raise the chances of an international war by only .5 percent. However, involvement in an increasing number of militarized disputes with the United States in the previous year does have a relatively larger impact. For every additional violent incident, the predicted probability of a state experiencing international war increases by 2 percent.

| Variable | Coefficient | Robust Standard Error | Z Score | Marginal Effects dy/dx |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| U.S. Military Presence | 5.19E-06 | 1.97E-06 | 2.64 | 9.85E-08 |
| U.S. Military Aid | 0.00015 | 0.0000982 | 1.53 | 2.85E-06 |
| U.S. Use of Force | 1.128034 | 0.1708236 | 6.60 | 0.0214167 |
| Votes w/U.S. in UN | 0.0054699 | 0.0016769 | 3.26 | 0.0001039 |
| Executive Constraints | -0.0323799 | 0.0351039 | -0.92 | -0.0006148 |
| Elective Competitivness | -0.0811368 | 0.2422333 | -0.33 | -0.0014599 |
| Regime Duration | 0.0024429 | 0.002483 | 0.98 | 0.0000464 |
| Population | -3.26E-10 | 9.72E-10 | -0.34 | -6.20E-12 |
| GDP per capita | -6.71E-06 | 1.37E-05 | -0.49 | -1.27E-07 |
| Share of Internatl Power | 0.0627508 | 0.0913809 | 0.69 | 0.0011914 |
| Western Hemisphere | -0.40344 | 0.2248787 | -1.79 | -0.0059099 |
| Europe | -0.7809481 | 0.3075078 | -2.54 | -0.0092678 |
| Asia | 0.3342616 | 0.1502836 | 2.22 | 0.0084766 |
| constant | -2.40652 | 0.1379194 | -17.45 | |

N = 3556
Pseudo R2 = 0.1590

a = Not all years will be represented in all analyses due to missing data, especially in the 1953-1967 period.
* = Statistically significant at the .05 level.
** = Statistically significant at the .01 level.

**Table 14. Predicting International Wars Across States, 1953-2003.[a]**

None of the coefficients for the other substantive, independent variables exercises a statistically significant impact on the incidence of international war. The coefficients for the regional dummy variables for Europe and the Western hemisphere were statistically significant and negative, while the incidence rate ratio for the Asian region is positive. The model would not run with the independent variable for the African region because that binary variable perfectly predicted instances of no war, which prevents the model from generating results.

| Country | Year | Predicted Probability | International War Occurrence |
|---|---|---|---|
| Israel | 1999 | 0.2551996 | 0 |
| China | 1999 | 0.2840371 | 0 |
| South Korea | 2000 | 0.2549845 | 0 |

**Table 15. Predicted Probability of International War Occurrence By Year.**

| Country | Predicted Probability |
|---|---|
| Israel | 0.1071857 |
| China | 0.1236773 |
| South Korea | 0.1112041 |

**Table 16. Predicted Probability of International War Occurrence from 1998-2003.**

I turn now to examining which nations the model predicts are most at risk for involvement in international war. I generated predicted probabilities for war involvement from the model and separated out those nations whose risk was at least 25 percent in the period 1998-2003. The states that exhibited the greatest likelihood of such violence were Israel (an average of 11 percent across 1998-2003 and reaching a high of 25.5 percent in 1999); China (an average of 12 percent across 1998-2003 and reaching a high of 28 percent in 2000); and South Korea (an average of 11 percent across the entire period and reaching a high of 25 percent in 2000). Again, because of the rarity of international wars, none of these nations was predicted to actually experience war involvement (i.e., a probability greater than 50 percent). In fact, not even those nations that were

predicted to be at the highest risk for international war involvement were actually involved in such disputes. Overall, the model predicts 98.4 percent of the cases correctly, but this is almost identical to the percentage of nation-state years in which there were no wars. The model does not improve upon the predictive accuracy one would obtain by predicting no international wars for every nation for every year in the data. International wars are quite rare.

But the nations that have the highest probability do seem to be likely contenders for international war, if there were to be one. China has its ongoing disputes with Taiwan regarding the status of that island nation and its tentative moves to something more like formal independence. China's relations with Vietnam have not always been peaceful, either. South Korea is nearly always at some degree of risk for war involvement on the Korean peninsula with its dictatorial and nuclear northern neighbor. And Israel has conflicts with any number of Middle East nations, such as Syria, Lebanon, and Iran that could flare up. Each of these three nations warrants close monitoring.

## CONCLUSIONS

There are several general findings from this analysis that deserve further comment. First, on the one hand I found a statistically significant relationship between several of the indicators of U.S. foreign policy and instability in foreign countries. The closer the relationship between a country and the United States as measured by many of these indicators in most of the estimates, the more likely nations were to experience various forms of instability. Yet, we also saw that, for the most part, the size of the impact of U.S. foreign

policy was not always strong. I begin by reviewing the impact of U.S. foreign policy on regime instability.

Of all the measures of ties to U.S. foreign policy, the one that demonstrated the strongest and most consistent effects in the estimates was U.S. military aid. The greater the amount of military aid received by a foreign government, the more at risk it becomes for instability, including terrorism, riots, assassinations, anti-government demonstrations, and civil wars. The challenge here, as in assessing the nature of the relationship among all the various independent and dependent variables, lies in evaluating the type of effect. As I indicated at the outset, while every precaution is taken in carrying out these analyses, making causal inferences must always be done with a healthy degree of objectivity and a critical eye. The relationship between U.S. military assistance and regime instability, for example, could be one of reverse causality in which the United States provides more such assistance to those nations that are most at risk for such events in order to help prevent future outbreaks of violence. The United States might provide more military aid to underdeveloped nations in general that are also more likely to experience this sort of domestic unrest. Regarding the first point, however, we must bear in mind that the values of the independent variables were lagged 1 year to help alleviate problems of reverse causality. Rather, it is more likely that regimes that receive greater amounts of military assistance possess a constellation of characteristics that make them susceptible to unrest and violence. It may well be that such assistance engenders opposition in some sectors of these societies. Nations that receive large amounts of military aid are also likely to have larger economies (small and poor nations would be unable to utilize

large amounts of military aid for the most part), but given their reliance on the United States for such aid, they are also unlikely to have economies sufficiently advanced and large enough to produce such hardware for themselves. Thus, their economies may well remain underdeveloped in key respects, which make them susceptible to instability. In this sense, the U.S. military aid relationship may be most prevalent in societies at more advanced stages of development, both economically and politically, that should cause policymakers to weigh carefully the consequences of such strong ties with the United States.

The other measure of U.S. foreign policy relationships that exercises a strong, albeit somewhat inconsistent, impact on regime instability is involvement in a militarized dispute with the United States. When the United States has used military force in or toward a foreign regime in the previous year, the predicted incidence of terrorism and civil wars tends to increase in the following year. Uses of force may inspire anti-American sentiment, embolden regime opponents to take violent action against the government (especially in cases where the United States is taking action against the regime), or may simply indicate the prevalence of uncertainty and trouble in a nation. Regardless of whether the United States uses of force accomplish their specific, operational objectives (e.g., providing a military presence, transporting military forces and/or military aid, rescuing American citizens), broader U.S. foreign policy goals may be harmed in these incidents to the extent the use of force serves to further destabilize a nation toward terrorism or civil war. Therefore, even when U.S. foreign policymakers determine a use of force is necessary, regardless of what other unintended and negative consequences might transpire, they must

be aware of the potential for more instability in the wake of such militarized actions and take the necessary precautions to preserve U.S. interests and protect U.S. allies.

We find less evidence that a large U.S. military presence contributes in any significant manner, at least so far as is apparent in these analyses, to regime instability. The effects of the size of the U.S. military presence on the indicators is either small, statistically insignificant, or both. Since most of the large U.S. military establishments in foreign countries tend to be fairly long-standing, whatever impact they have on (in)stability within such states (e.g., North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) allies, South Korea, and Japan) does not generally change from year to year, as indicators of civil unrest do. Rather, it may be that whatever positive or negative effects a U.S. military presence in these nations generates have long since become systemic or more or less permanent features of the political landscape in these nations. If there were a sudden and drastic rise or curtailing of a U.S. military presence, we might expect to find a more pronounced effect. It may also be that the causal arrow is somewhat circular. Instability in some nations may lead to a greater U.S. troop presence, which in turn leads to more conflict. Teasing out the causal relationships among the three indicators of a U.S. military relationship with regimes could be furthered by in-depth and comparative case studies.

The last U.S. foreign policy indicator to consider is the extent to which a nation's voting record in the UN General Assembly mirrors that of the United States. As a state's voting record in the UN more closely resembles that of the United States, the incidence of various forms of instability, including riots, anti-

government demonstrations, assassinations, and government crises, increase. Anti-Americanism is often *de rigueur* in many nations, and thus making public pronouncements against U.S. foreign policy objectives almost seems to be reflexive in many capitals around the world. Those in power generally understand that their public and private face in regard to U.S. foreign policy must remain different and separable. These data reveal why such public posturing, as evidenced in the UN General Assembly, tends to occur. Regimes run a significant risk if they appear too cozy with the United States, as evidence of such ties inspires political violence and other forms of instability. U.S. foreign policy positions will often be opposed simply because many view U.S. foreign policy objectives as nothing more than attempts at U.S. global domination. Interestingly, however, foreign policy similarity is negatively related to the incidence of terrorism. This is rather puzzling since one would expect that this type of violence might be precipitated by closeness to the United States. Perhaps, however, given the need for greater time and organizational effort to mount a terrorist attack, there may be a longer time interval between a regime's evidence of shared foreign policy outlook with the United States and the incidence of terrorist violence.

The nature of a country's political system also plays a crucial role. We saw throughout the analyses that as constraints on the executive branch of government increased, the incidences of terrorism, riots, anti-government demonstrations, assassinations, government crises, and civil wars all increased. Clearly, powerful executives play a powerful role in clamping down on virtually all forms of domestic unrest. Only in the case of international wars do we find no statistically significant relationship, as we

might expect since this type of violence is one initiated by the executive branch. On the other hand, political competitiveness serves to decrease the likelihood of riots, anti-government demonstrations, government crises, assassinations, and civil wars. Viewed from the perspective of domestic tranquility, the most effective form of government would appear to be one with a strong executive and robust political competition. The challenge in many states that confront domestic unrest and are seeking to design more effective political institutions to combat these problems is to reconcile those parties and individuals who compete against one another to accept forceful control of the executive by one party or one individual. Achieving this type of consensus would seem to be the key.

Economic prosperity appears to decrease instability. The greater a nation's per capita GDP, the lower the predicted incidence of riots, anti-government demonstrations, assassinations, and civil wars. A prosperous citizenry is a peaceful citizenry. Economically advanced states provide more material wealth and security to their citizens; well-developed economies require substantial numbers of hard-working citizens who then have less time to engage in violent, political behavior; and healthy economies tend not to breed discontent and angry young men with nothing to do (large numbers of such young men are often prerequisites to such violence). We also see, however, that more powerful states are more likely to experience acts of terrorism, riots, assassinations, and anti-government demonstrations, but are less likely to be involved in civil wars. These states typically have large economies, large populations, and large militaries. Their major power status among the nations of the world may make them inviting targets for disaffected

groups within their borders and terrorists from both the outside and inside, but not to the point at which intrastate war breaks out.

The strongest evidence of regional trends in these data is found in the analyses of terrorist acts, anti-government demonstrations, civil wars, and international wars where I show that the nations of the Middle East were much more likely to experience such violence. Despite the presence of many other variables in these models that help explain the prevalence of these indicators of domestic unrest and violence, there is still something peculiar about such problems in the Middle East that makes that part of the world especially conflict-prone. Such unique factors would include the Arab-Israeli conflict, oil wealth, religious schisms, authoritarian governments, and severe inequalities in the distribution of wealth, to name but a few. This does not mean that other countries of the world outside the Middle East are comparatively less violent or safe. Indeed, there are a great many conflicts both large and small occurring in Africa and Southeast Asia. Rather, the Middle East more generally has been and will likely continue to be predisposed to such violence because of many factors, but in particular the sorts of transnational forces mentioned above.

When viewed as a whole, the findings tend to show that U.S. foreign policymakers should be mindful of the unintended consequences of the provision of military assistance and the use of force, particularly the impact these manifestations of U.S. power and influence have on those groups in the affected states opposed to U.S. interests and prepared to take action to demonstrate their opposition. There will always be such actors who are unalterably opposed to virtually every aspect of U.S. foreign policy and with whom little legitimate

political discussion is possible. But there are always many other economic, social, ethnic, and political groups within societies which, while they may oppose, even strongly, these manifestations of U.S. influence, are open to dialogue and negotiation. Policymakers should be mindful of the impact their actions have on these groups and individuals who are part of a critical mass of regime citizens able to influence the direction of political opposition toward violence or nonviolence. This is not to suggest that it is necessarily the role of the U.S. Government to consult with such actors for this might well impinge on the sovereignty of the government and undermine the very purposes of the policy. Rather, before embarking on important new aid relationships or the use of military force, policymakers need contingency plans to work with such groups to prevent the outbreak of violence to ensure that U.S. foreign policy goals can still be realized.

This monograph provides us with important new insights into both the impact of U.S. foreign policy actions on societal unrest in other nations and the various other causes of instability. The next step in this process is to develop "real-time" indicators of societal instability to better predict when such unrest is likely to transform into more serious violence and challenges to governmental authority. Key to this will be development of data on the indicators used in this monograph on a monthly, if not daily, unit of analysis—a project we are currently developing at the University of North Texas through the creation of an Early Warning Center to monitor all nations of the world through various electronic media, and intergovernmental organizational and nongovernment organizational reports. By deploying a team of student researchers who will monitor this information on a daily

basis, we hope to develop a more fine-grained analysis of emerging trends and events, while at the same time creating a data base of such information to develop better and more systematic explanations of regime instability. The use of annual aggregated data, such as I use in this analysis, is useful in providing researchers and policymakers with a more macro-level perspective on unrest. But, if we wish to better determine when these nations are most at risk for violence, more refined data on the measures used here, as well as actions taken by regimes that might precipitate violence (e.g., mass arrests, crackdowns on political opposition, etc.) are also needed to predict with more precision when threats to peace and stability are most likely.

## ENDNOTES

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2. Margaret Hermann and Charles Kegley, "The Use of U.S. Military Intervention to Promote Democracy: Evaluating the Record," *International Interactions*, Vol. 24, 1998, pp. 91-114; James Meernik, "U.S. Military Intervention and the Promotion of Democracy," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 33, 1996, pp. 391-402; Mark Peceny, *Democracy At The Point Of Bayonets*, University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999.

3. Patrick Regan, "U.S. Economic Aid and Political Repression," *Political Research Quarterly*, Vol. 48, 1995, pp. 613-628.

4. S. Knack, "Does Foreign Aid Promote Democracy?" *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 48, No. 1, 2004, pp. 251-266.

5. Bruce Bueno de Mesquita and George Downes, "Intervention and Democracy," *International Organization*, Vol. 60, July 2006, pp. 627-649; Mark Peceny and Jeffrey Pickering, "Forging Democracy at Gunpoint," *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 3, 2006, pp. 539-560.

6. Data on U.S. troop levels in all foreign countries and certain overseas possessions are obtained from the Department of Defense at *web1.whs.osd.mil/mmid/military/miltop.htm*. I measure these data in September of every year as does the Department of Defense, and count only troops stationed outside the 50 United States, Guam, the Johnson Atoll, Puerto Rico, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. I also include U.S. naval and other forces that are listed as "afloat" in any given nation or region.

7. Regan, p. 625.

8. Knack, p. 262.

9. Data on military assistance provided by the U.S. Government are taken from the Agency for International Development's *U.S. Overseas Loans and Grants Series of Yearly Data from 1949-1994*, and more recent updates available at the USAID web site at *www.dec.org/* by searching on the above title. The data are measured in constant dollars in million dollar increments.

10. Thomas Carothers, Thomas, *Aiding Democracy Abroad*, Washington DC: The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2000, p. 308.

11. Robert J. Art, "A Defensible Defense: America's Grand Strategy after the Cold War," *International Security*, Vol. 15, 1991, pp. 5-53; Bueno de Mesquita and Downes; Richard Haass, *Intervention*, Washington DC: A Carnegie Endowment Book, 1994; Peceny and Pickering.

12. Data on Militarized Interstate Disputes (MIDs) are freely available at *cow2.la.psu.edu/* (Ghosn, Palmer, and Bremer, 2004). These events are defined as "united historical cases of conflict in which the threat, display, or use of military force short of war by one member state is explicitly directed towards the government, official representatives, official forces, property, or territory of

another state" (Jones, Bremer, and Singer, 1996). I count all those instances involving the United States and directed toward another nation that score a "2" or higher on the Hostility Level variable that is a part of these data. These incidents include militarized interstate disputes in which there was a threat to use force; a display of force; a use of force; or war.

13. This portion of *The Annual Defense Report* is found at *www.dtic.mil/execsec/adr2000/chap1.html*.

14. Meernik; Peceny.

15. These data are constructed by examining all roll call votes taken in the UN General Assembly, and comparing the voting positions of the United States and all other states to determine on how many issues they voted in the same manner as the United States and on how many issues states voted dissimilarly to the United States.

16. The Polity IV data base measures many different characteristics of regimes throughout the world for dozens of years. The principal scale used to measure the level of democracy in states is known as the "Polity 2" scale which ranges from "-10" (least level of democracy) to "10," which is the highest democratic rating. Such factors as the competitiveness of elections, the openness of political systems, the manner in which executives are recruited, and the extent of executive powers are among the different measures that make up this scale. Further information is freely available at *www.cidcm.umd.edu/polity/*.

17. Quan Li, "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?" *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 49, No. 2, 2005, pp. 278-297.

18. Monty G. Marshall and Keith Jaggers, *Polity IV Codebook*, College Park: University of Maryland, Center for International Development and Conflict Management, December 2000, p. 25.

19. *Ibid*., p. 24.

20. Detailed information on this and the other variables from Polity IV can be found in the project codebook available at *www.cidcm.umd.edu/polity/*.

21. Brian Burgoon, "On Welfare and Terror," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 50, No. 2, 2006, pp. 176-203; Sara Jackson Wade and Dan Reiter, "Does Democracy Matter? Regime Type and Suicide Terrorism," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 2, 2007, pp. 329-348.

22. Li

23. The Correlates of War data base and its CINC scores can be accessed at *cow2.la.psu.edu/*.

24. Data are available for purchase at *www.databanks.sitehosting.net/*.

25. Aggregated and provided by Aaron Clauset, Maxwell Young, and Kristian Gleditsch, "On the Frequency of Severe Terrorist Events," *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 1, 2007, pp. 58-87.

26. The data I use may be accessed at *jcr.sagepub.com/cgi/content/full/51/1/58/DC1/*.

27. These data are available at *cow2.la.psu.edu/*.

28. Please see *www.csae.ox.ac.uk/econdata/pdfs/edds2002-01.pdf*.

29. Li.

30. Burgoon; Li; Wade and Reiter.

31. Li.

32. Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 13, 1981, pp. 379-399; William L. Eubank and Leonard B. Weinberg, "Does Democracy Encourage Terrorism?" *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 6, No. 4, 1994, pp. 417-435; 2001; A. P. Schmid, "Terrorism and Democracy," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 4, 1992, pp. 14-25.

33. Li.